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The Family History of Shawna K. Witherspoon

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The Family History of
Shawna K. Witherspoon

25 September 2019

Mrs. Shawna K. Witherspoon authored this family history as part of the course requirements for HIST 550/700 Your Family in History offered online in Fall 2019 and was submitted to the Pittsburgh State University Digital Commons. Please contact the author directly with any questions or comments:
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List of Direct Line Family Members

Generation One

- A1. Nathaniel Witherspoon Jr. (1986-)
- A2. Shawna K. Hendry (1988-)

Generation Two

- A1a. Jimmy Wilson Hendry (1971-)
- A1b. Linda Jean Shallenburger (1972-)

Generation Three

- A1a1. Ronald Hendry (1941-2003)
- A1a2. Vicki Jo Vandiver (1943-)
- A1b1. Frederick E. Shallenburger (1937-)
- A1b2. Betty Jean Hixenbaugh (1938-)

Generation Four

- A1a1a. Albert Hendry (1913-1988)
- A1a1b. Frances Elizabeth Decker (1917-2007)
- A1a2a. Eugene Vandiver (1920-1976)
- A1a2b. Lola Nadine Welsh Forrest (1923-2011)

Alb1a. Harry Lee Shallenburger (1914-1980)
Alb1b. Margery Ardeth Overstreet (1914-1997)

Alb2a. James Samuel Hixenbaugh (1897-1953)
Alb2b. Cecil Gertrude Burkybile (1906-1982)

Generation Five

Ala1a1. James Albert Hendry (1865-1945)
Ala1a2. Mattie Mellesie Calhoun (1876-1947)

Ala1b1. Francis Howard Decker (1896-1974)
Ala1b2. Verlin Ellen Neal (1898-993)

Ala2a1. William Vandiver (1888-1952)
Ala2a2. Effie Hacker (1893-1967)

Ala2b1. UNK (-)
Ala2b2. UNK (-)

Alb1a1. Walter William Shallenburger (1881-1948)
Alb1a2. Bessie Audella Coberly (1891-1946)

Alb1b1. James William Overstreet (1888-1947)
Alb1b2. Mary Catherine Palmer (1888-1922)

Alb2a1. Henry Hixenbaugh (1843-1933)
Alb2a2. Sara J. Wright (1856-1932)

Alb2b1. George Franklin Burkybile (1870-1943)
Alb2b2. Anna Elizabeth Adamson (1878-1935)

GENERATION ONE

Shawna K. Hendry (1988-) was born in at the Oak Hill Hospital in Joplin, Missouri, on October 25th, 1988 to **Jimmy Wilson Hendry (1935-)** and **Linda Jean Shallenburger (1938-)**. They were young parents and even though the labor was difficult, late in the evening they had their beautiful baby girl in their arms¹. Linda would never forget the first meal they ate as new parents. By the time Shawna was delivered, all the restaurants and even the hospital cafeteria was closed. Jimmy went all over the hospital and eventually found a vending machine with several hoagie sandwiches. He bought two and warmed them in a microwave located in a waiting room near the maternity ward. Linda said the sandwich tasted like rubber and neither of them could eat it, but their hearts were full of love and their young lives were forever changed.

Jimmy and Linda were both still in High School. Jimmy passed his GED exam and enrolled in the Diesel Mechanic Certification Course at Fort Scott Community College. On June 23rd, 1989, just 8 short months after the birth of their baby girl, they were married in a small, blonde brick church that Linda had grown up in. The Pastor blessed their union in front of their closest friends and family, while Shawna sat in the front pew next to her grandparents, **Fred Shallenburger (1937-)** and **Betty Shallenburger (1938-)**.

¹ Personal knowledge of the author, Shawna K. Witherspoon.

The couple moved frequently, almost every two years. Jimmy claimed that if a person did not move every two years, they would collect too much junk!² Three years after the birth of their daughter, Jimmy and Linda welcomed a son, **Joshua Michael Hendry (1991-)** into their quaint little family on May 25th, 1991. Joshua was brought into their two-bedroom home situated across the street from the same little church they had pledged their love in two years prior. As their love grew, so did their family. On May 26th, 1993, another son, **Garrett Ryan Hendry (1993-)** was born. Their family was complete, and they sat out on many adventures as the children grew.

1993 marked more than the birth of their youngest child. It was also the year that Southeast Kansas experienced record-breaking flooding. Their small town of Riverton Kansas was almost an island. With almost every road closed leading in and out of the town, it turned Jimmy and Linda's 20-minute commute to work into several hours of travel. Shawna and her siblings stayed with their grandparents Fred and Betty for a little while so that Jimmy and Linda could work. Two or three times a day, Fred would take Shawna for a walk. As they walked hand in hand, they headed down the road toward the river. Fred encouraged Shawna to find rocks and sticks that they would line up on the road to mark where the water line was. They would then check on the next walk to see if the water had rose or fallen in the previous few hours.³

² Personal knowledge of Jimmy Hendry.

³ Personal Knowledge of the author, Shawna K. Witherspoon.

As Shawna grew, so did her love of the small town. She made friends and in Kindergarten, she found the sister she had always hoped she would have, Kaleigh Lynn Wimmer (1988-). Kaleigh and Shawna were inseparable. They did everything together, family vacations and even birthdays. The girls happened to be born seven days apart from one another and although their parents were not friends then, they too became close friends as the girl's friendship grew. Kaleigh's parents ran the skating rink in a neighboring town. Every Friday and Saturday night were spent laughing and skating as they grew from young elementary school girls, into beautiful young ladies.

Just as most small towns in the United States, Riverton was no exception when it came to small town drama. As Shawna and Kaleigh tried to navigate the complexities of social constructions and puberty, it became apparent that Riverton might not be the best place for Shawna to finish school. By this time, Shawna had lived on what her father described as a "hobby farm". They raised pigs, Boer goats, chickens, and had a couple head of cattle and two llamas. The family raised these animals for food, to sell as additional income, and used them to participate in a local 4-H group, the Spring Valley Sparklers.

Shawna made new friends and enjoyed the time she spent with them on camping trips and for one week every year, they stayed at the fairgrounds in Columbus, Kansas at the Cherokee County Fair. One year, Shawna had a very special pig. The pig won reserve grand champion at the fair and Jimmy decided that they would try their hand at breeding for the next years pigs. Shawna spent numerous hours in the pen with this pig. She named her Precious Princess Pig and called her Precious

for short. She would sit with her legs crossed in the pen and Precious would come up and lay her big head in Shawna's lap so she could clean her teeth, ears, and eyes.

With much deliberation, Shawna and her parents decided that it would be in her best interest to move schools. In December of her freshman year of high school, Shawna transferred to Columbus Unified High School. On a hot day in May, Shawna had come home from school and went to check on the animals before starting her homework. As she approached the pig pen, she noticed that several t-posts had been broken off level with the ground and Precious was nowhere to be found. She ran to the barn, grabbed a bucket of rolled oats and crimped corn covered with molasses and set out find Precious. Approximately half a mile from their home, she found Precious in the pond behind a new housing addition. Shawna yelled her name, shook the bucket and Precious came running! With little effort, she followed Shawna back to their home and into her pen. Shawna mended the fence and with much relief, went in the house to work on her homework. ⁴

In her time spent at Columbus Unified High School, Shawna discovered a passion that she never would have guessed she had. She discovered a passion for art, specifically ceramics. She had an amazing art teacher E. John Smittle that worked with her to teach her anything she wanted to know about ceramics. He took her and a small group of other students to workshops and to meet other artists that have made a living out of their passion for ceramics. There has always been a debate

⁴ Personal knowledge of the author, Shawna K. Witherspoon.

in the art world about whether ceramists are artists or artisans. Shawna likes to think that she can be both. She claims to live in the "gray area between artist and artisan". She describes this as being able to create functional items, created by following artists principles of design.

In Figure 6.6 "Households with Key Domestic Goods, by Year," Fischer and Hout use this graph to illustrate the trend in domestic items owned by Americans from 1900-2000. When the data is analyzed, it tells us that many items, such as inside toilets, telephones, and automobiles, were eventually universally owned. Homeownership, however, did not follow that same trend. Due to governmental laws back in the early 1900's, data was collected according to race. This knowledge allowed the authors to see that by the 1940's indoor plumbing was spreading. 63 percent of whites had indoor plumbing, where only 26 percent of blacks had indoor plumbing. It also highlights how nearly no-one owned a car in 1900 and in 1935, 60 percent of whites owned a car compared to only 20 percent of blacks. By 1990, 95 percent of whites owned a car compared to 80 percent of blacks bringing the percent difference down to 15 points. The authors go on to state that diffusion is what lead to nearly all Americans, regardless of background or race, owning a car by the end of the century.⁵

Charles F. Decker emigrated to the United states from Germany around 1850 and worked in Philadelphia under a potter by the name of Richard Remmey, a Philadelphia stoneware manufacturer. Around 1870, he

⁵ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 155-156.

moved south and established Keystone Pottery. Decker and his sons managed to make Keystone Pottery the largest manufacturer of household wares in the state of Tennessee from the mid 1870's to 1906. Decker specialized in jugs, large crocks, and churns. He also made flower-pots, paving stones, tombstones, chamber pots and drainage pipes.⁶

Seeing the spread of ownership of household items, such as indoor plumbing, gives perspective to the demand for the items that Decker and his sons were producing. One of Decker's sons was Frederick Decker, him and his wife Sara Jane Broyles gave birth to a son, Francis Howard Decker and moved to Villisca, Iowa. Francis and his wife Verlin had a daughter, whom they named Frances Elizabeth. I knew her as Moe, and she was my great-grandmother. Although they did not continue ceramics, I was very intrigued to learn about this part of my history. We know traits are inherited from our ancestors and I have always had a passion for art. Ceramics is my chosen media and has always felt very natural to me. Many pieces of Decker pottery are in museums in Tennessee today and I hope to go visit soon.

Shawna met her husband, **Nate Witherspoon Jr. (1986-)** in the summer of 2008. The couple quickly moved in together and they had their first child together on October 11th, 2009 and named her Nalahna Gail Witherspoon. In August 2011, the couple had a son, Nathaniel Witherspoon III. At this point, their family was complete. Nate had two children before the couple met and Shawna had one. The family of five legally

⁶ Cox, Stephen D. "Charles Frederick Decker Sr." Tennessee Encyclopedia. Tennessee Historical Society, March 1, 2018. <https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/charles-frederick-decker-sr/>.

joined on August 10th, 2013, in front of a group of their family and friends.⁷ Mr. and Mrs. Witherspoon bought their first home together in 2016, in her hometown of Riverton, KS.

⁷ Ibid pg. 7

GENERATION TWO

A1a. Jimmy Wilson Hendry (1971-)

A1b. Linda Jean Shallenburger (1972-)

Jimmy Wilson Hendry was born on 21 July 1971 in Brookfield, Linn County, Missouri, to **Ronald Hendry (1941-2003)** and **Vicki Jo Vandiver (1943-)**.

He was the youngest of 5 children, his siblings are **Becky Jo Duwe (1958-)**, **Tammy Lynn Eby (1960-)**, **Roni Howard Hendry (1962-)**, and **Sherri Kaye Kirk (1963-)**. Jimmy's family grew up moving homes often, usually due to his father buying or selling their home or business. Jimmy doesn't speak much of his early childhood but tells stories of his adolescent years.

Their family moved to a farm in Stotts City, Mo in 1975. Jimmy recalls riding on the hay wagons with his sisters and helping his mother make lunch because he was not big enough to do much else. When he became old enough that he could sit on books and reach the tractor pedals, he too was responsible for helping with the family farm. Jimmy used to sit on Matco tool catalogs so he could see over the hood of the tractor.⁸ The stories told about Jimmy's childhood are all that is left of his early years due to a house fire when he was little. In the Mount Vernon Newspaper in April 1977, an image of Jimmy's father, **Ronald Howard Hendry (1941-2003)**, standing in front of their home as smoke billowed from every window and every door. The article reads, "Hendry had returned from Mount Vernon and changed his boots on the back porch before noticing some electrical wires on the back of the

⁸ Personal knowledge of Jimmy Wilson Hendry.

house were sparking. He opened the door to the interior for the first time and found the house full of smoke... ..Mount Vernon and Stotts City Fire departments responded and fought the blaze, but the house was gutted and nearly all household furnishings were destroyed before the blaze could be put out. Friends of the Hendry family say they have lost all their clothing and have organized a contribution drive for clothing and household items and a special account has been established at First National Bank in Mount Vernon."

Jimmy described a feeling of desperation in 1983, while he attempted to pack all his favorite things into a small trunk after hearing his father come home and tell his mother she had two hours to pack whatever would fit in their three cars, because he had sold the farm and purchased a home and battery shop in Baxter Springs, Kansas. This type of moving and change in occupation was not unfamiliar to the family, however, they described how no number of moves makes leaving friends behind easier. While in Baxter Springs, Jimmy's nephew lived in their home for a few years. Bobby Lynn Wilbanks (1978-) was the son of Tammy Eby (1960-). Jimmy and Bobby were only seven years apart. Due to their close age, they used to spend large amounts of time together. Jimmy told a story of how Bobby and he would ride their dirt bikes from their house in Baxter Springs, to chat piles on the outside of town. As the years passed and middle school turned into high school, Jimmy found himself at a party where he met **Linda Shallenburger (1972-)** in the summer of 1987.

Linda Jean Shallenburger (1972-) was born in 1972 in Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri. She is the fourth child and only girl born to **Frederick E. Shallenburger (1937-)** and **Betty Jean Hixenbaugh (1938-)**. Linda has three older brothers, **James Shallenburger (1957-)**, **Mark Shallenburger (1960-)**, and **Troy Shallenburger (1963-)**. Linda was raised in Riverton, Kansas, in a home on Southeast Quaker Road, that Fred and Betty purchased around 1980. They worked to add on two bedrooms providing the home with a total of five bedrooms and with the ten acres the home was positioned on, it made for a comfortable place to raise their children.

Linda was around eight years old when they moved to the home on Quaker Road. She often talks about Uncle Leo W. VanAuker (1914-2009) and Alice I. VanAuker (1918-2006). Leo and Alice were not biologically related to Linda, but they were unable to have children of their own. Linda was as close to a daughter as the couple had and thus, Uncle Leo and Aunt Alice became prominent people in her life. The couple moved to Riverton, Kansas, from San Diego, California, in January 1978.⁹ Leo served his country in the Navy in WWII and Alice was a homemaker, who enjoyed being an active member of the Riverton Friends Church.¹⁰

Growing up, Shawna spent much of her time with her maternal grandmother Betty and Grandfather Fred. Shawna's mother Linda had migraines and spent many years unable to get out of bed most days. When Shawna and her brothers were growing up, every year for Halloween they would

⁹ "Alice Irene Washburn VanAuker (1918-2006) - Find..." Find A Grave. Accessed November 19, 2019. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13217349/alice-irene-vanauker>.

¹⁰ "Leo W. VanAuker (1914-2009) - Find A Grave..." Find A Grave. Accessed November 19, 2019. https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/34477764/leo-w_-vanauker.

get dressed and after going to grandma Betty and Grandpa Fred's house, they would walk across the street to visit Uncle Leo and Aunt Alice. They always made special treat bags for the three of them and would take a photo of the children in front of a large bay window in their sitting room. Leo would snap two photos with a polaroid camera and after shaking them lovingly with his hands, he would hand one to Alice and the other to Shawna to take home to her parents. This tradition continued until the children no longer participated in Halloween. Upon reaching middle school, Shawna would go see Uncle Leo and Aunt Alice after she had gotten ready for every school dance. Aunt Alice had a guest bedroom that she kept all of her Avon product in and when Shawna came over, Aunt Alice always had some sort of jewelry or body glitter puff or some sort of finishing touch that she would add so that Shawna was perfect before her photo.¹¹

¹¹ Ibid pg. 7

GENERATION THREE

A1a1. Ronald Howard Hendry (1941-2003)

A1a2. Vicki Jo Vandiver (1943-)

A1b1. Frederick E. Shallenburger (1937-)

A1b2. Betty Jean Hixenbaugh (1938-)

Shawna's paternal grandfather, **Ronald Howard Hendry (1941-2003)**, was born in Villisca, Montgomery county, Iowa, to **Albert Wilson Hendry (1913-1988)** and **Frances Elizabeth Decker (1935-2007)**.

Although to him, Villisca, was the town he was born in and the place his parents were married, not so pleasant memories stay with many others of the not so innocent town. June 12th, 1912, the population of Villisca, Iowa, was approximately 2,500. This was the day a peaceful little town would forever be changed. A family of 6 and 2 neighboring children were murdered with an axe. Six months later, my great-grandfather was born. My father did not know much about his grandfather and he died the year I was born. Although the family moved south, they always seemed live in small towns about the size of Villisca. The town has continued to fall in population, likely an effect of closing the mines, forcing miners' families to move to find work. In 1994, the house was restored and placed on the historic homes' national registry. Thanks to this restoration, anyone can visit the house of the massacre and learn the history of the not so peaceful little town.¹²

¹² "Villisca, Iowa." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, November 2, 2019. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villisca,_Iowa.

Ronald was known as Ron, to his close friends and family and they described him as a large, German man. He was stern in his views on the roles of men and women. Ron believed that men were to work and provide for their family and women were to be obedient to their husbands and to raise their children. Ron had many occupations that included farming and the owner/operator of several small businesses. He and his wife **Vicki Jo Vandiver (1943-)** owned a battery shop in Baxter Springs, Kansas, that he sold to purchase a BF Goodrich tire store in Pittsburg, Kansas, that he named Pittsburg Discount Tire.¹³ His son Jimmy said, "my dad could sell ice to an Eskimo if he wanted to".

Ron was handy with a wrench and could fix almost any vehicle. An avid drag racer, Ron was known by many on the drag racing circuit in the Midwest. His positive associations with "car guys" are what made his battery and tire businesses so successful.

Shawna spent many days at the racetrack with her grandfather and her dad. The smell of the high-octane race fuel was sweet and the desire to win is a trait that has been successfully passed from Ron, to his sons, and then to their children. Ron's son Jimmy and wife Vicki discussed one of Ron's biggest achievements, holding the National record in the AHRA Stock Option Class. Ron broke the previous record in the 1970s and his record held for approximately twenty years. Vicki remembered reading about her husband's record-breaking pass in an edition of Hot Rod Magazine.

¹³ Personal knowledge of Vicki Jo Vandiver.

Jimmy spent many years at the racetrack with his father. After Ron passed, Vicki gave a pocketknife to Jimmy. Jimmy describes the pocketknife as old and worn. Jimmy said that knife still smelled like the racetrack. Jimmy and his daughter Shawna reminisced about the knife and all the things Ron used it for. Ron used to scrape gaskets coated in grease off the block of an engine at the track. He would then just wipe it off on his old denim overalls. When lunch rolled around, Ron would pull out his knife to open a can of Vienna sausage and to slice Colby Jack cheese. He would then offer the grease tainted cheese and sausage to everyone that was near him and as much as they might not want it, they always took what he offered.

Shawna's paternal grandmother is **Vicki Jo Vandiver (1943-)**, she was born on November 7th, 1943 in Bethany, Harrison County, Missouri, to **Eugene Vandiver (1920-1976)** and **Lola Nadine Welsh Forrest (1923-2011)**. Eugene and Lola Vandiver had one daughter, Sandra Kay Vandiver (1941-), before they had Vicki. Vicki does not know much about her biological father. By the time Eugene and Lola had both of the girls, Lola's family disowned her for choosing to marry a Vandiver. After a few years of struggling, Eugene left, leaving Lola to raise and provide for the girls alone. Unable to combat her own battles, Lola left both girls with Eugene's mother, **Effie Hacker (1893-1967)**. Effie raised the girls as best she could.¹⁴ Lola later remarried and eventually reconnected with her daughters. Before her death in 2011, Shawna was able to get a photograph that included her two-year-old son, herself, her father Jimmy,

¹⁴ Ibid pg. 15.

grandmother Vicki, and great grandmother Lola, marking five generations of living family members.

Ron Hendry married Vicki Jo Vandiver on January 20th, 1958. Vicki was only 15 years old at the time. In November of that same year, she gave birth to their first child, a daughter Becky Jo. Vicki doesn't really talk about her life when the children were young. She did as Ron told her and took care of their children. She would even have to wait to get groceries when he told her to and often times, he would check the millage on her car upon her return.¹⁵ Interestingly enough, their family was closer than most, as Vicki's older sister Sandra Kay, married Ron's older Brother Paul Wesley (12/08/1938-2018) June 27th, 1958.¹⁶

Shawna's Maternal grandfather, **Frederick Eugene Shallenburger (1937-)** was born to **Harry Lee Shallenburger (1914-1980)** and **Margery Ardeth Overstreet (1914-1997)** January 17th, 1937. Fred had one older brother and three younger brothers. The family grew up in the small town of Galena, KS, in a home that his father, Harry Lee built on Dewey St.

He was a member of the Army National Reserves for many years and worked swing shift at Farmers Chemical in Galena, KS, for 50 years. Around 1980, Fred moved to a home in Riverton, KS, located on Quaker Rd. He spent most of his adult life working, but when he was off work, he liked to hunt and play slow pitch softball on an adult league. In

¹⁵ Personal knowledge of Jimmy Hendry.

¹⁶ Ibid pg. 15.

his later years, he became one of the deacons at the Riverton Friends Church and was also member of the church's elders board.

Shawna's maternal grandmother **Betty Jean Hixenbaugh (1938-)**, was born on April 8th, 1938 to **James Samuel Hixenbaugh (1897-1953)** and **Cecil Gertrude Burkybile (1906-1982)**. Betty had several siblings, Annie Hixenbaugh (?-1985), Josephine Hixenbaugh (?-), James Giddens (1927-?), Juanita Giddens (1930-), Mae Hixenbaugh (?- 2018), June Hixenbaugh (1936-), and Jerry Hixenbaugh (1941-) and two others that died in infancy.

Betty grew up in a little farmhouse just outside the city limits of Galena, KS. Their home was small with a dirt floor and an outhouse in the back yard. As a child, one of her chores was to wash the dishes. Betty and her two sisters, Mae and June would clear the table every night and wash all the dishes. She remembers that Mae would always have to use the restroom just when the sink was full and ready for washing.¹⁷

Betty attended a one room schoolhouse for the beginning of school years. Once in high school, she attended Riverton High in Riverton, KS. She would have to walk a little over half a mile to get to the stop where the bus would pick her up to take her to Riverton. Betty recalls a boy that used to ride his bus. During the cold winter months, he would iron his jeans every morning before leaving the house to wait on the bus, Betty says this was to help him stay warm. She said that she hated to iron and after ironing all her father's clothes every day, she would rather just be cold than have to iron her jeans

¹⁷ Personal knowledge of Betty Hixenbaugh.

in the mornings. Betty's father passed away when she was just 15 years old. Betty doesn't discuss much about her father, but she remembers how her father and her uncle George used to sit at the table after they had finished eating and would argue over who got to eat the last of her mothers' homemade biscuits. She also told a story of how there used to be a store in Galena, KS, and that every so often, her father would take them down to the store after he had been paid and would buy bologna as a special treat for them to make sandwiches out of.

GENERATION FOUR

Ala1a. Albert Hendry (1913-1988)

Ala1b. Frances Elizabeth Decker (1917-2007)

Ala2a. Eugene Vandiver (1920-1976)

Ala2b. Lola Nadine Welsh Forrest (1923-2011)

Alb1a. Harry Lee Shallenburger (1914-1980)

Alb1b. Margery Ardeth Overstreet (1914-1997)

Alb2a. James Samuel Hixenbaugh (1897-1953)

Alb2b. Cecil Gertrude Burkybile (1906-1982)

Shawna's paternal great grandfather **Albert Hendry (1913-1988)** was born to **James Albert Hendry (1865-1945)** and **Mattie Mellesie Calhoun (1876-1947)** on March 12th, 1913 in Illinois.¹⁸

Shawna's Paternal great grandmother **Frances Elizabeth Decker (1917-2007)** was born to **Francis Howard Decker (1896-1974)** and **Verlin Ellen Neal (1898-1967)** on September 15th, 1917 in Villisca, Iowa.¹⁹

Albert Hendry (1913-1988) and Frances Elizabeth Decker (1917-2007) were married in Villisca, Montgomery County, Iowa, on October 12, 1935.²⁰ Although Shawna never met Albert, she has grown up seeing pictures of him and remembers family gatherings in Mt. Vernon where Frances was there. Shawna had always known Frances as Mo and had always heard the family refer to Albert as Po. Jimmy claims no recollection of how his grandparents got those names, just knows that as he was growing up, his older sibling and everyone in the family, referred

¹⁸ FamilySearch. Accessed August 23, 2019. <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/pedigree/landscape/GSR2-QT1>.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

to them as such. Up until 2019, Shawna did not know what their legal names were.

Eugene Vandiver (1920-1976) was born to **William Vandiver (1888-1952)** and **Effie Hacker (1893-1967)** on October 1st, 1920 in Missouri.²¹ The only story about him was told by Vicki Joe Vandiver, Shawna's paternal grandmother. She claimed that she had not seen her father in over 15 years and one day while her husband's parents were visiting there was a knock on the door. Ron's father Albert, opened the door to find a very large, dark complected man standing on the porch. Ron's parents had never really been very fond of Vicki and used this as an opportunity to accuse her of "bringing strange men into the home". Vicki could hardly recognize her father and just as quickly as the wind blew him in, he was gone again.

Shawna's maternal great grandfather **Harry Lee Shallenburger (1914-1980)** was born to **Walter William Shallenburger (1881-1948)** and **Bessie Audella Coberly (1891-1946)** on April 14th, 1914 in Galena, Kansas.

Margery Ardeth Overstreet (1914-1997) was born to **James William Overstreet (1888-1947)** and **Mary Catherine Palmer (1888-1922)** on February 11th, 1914 in Central City, Missouri.²²

Harry Lee Shallenburger married Margery Ardeth Overstreet in 1934.²³ Harry Lee Shallenburger (1914-1980) had built a home that him and his wife, Margery Ardeth Overstreet (1914-1997) lived in for many years.

²¹ Personal knowledge of Vicki Vandiver.

²² Ibid

²³ Personal knowledge of Betty Hixenbaugh.

The two-bedroom, one bath house on Dewey street in Galena, KS, was also one of the homes Shawna lived in as a young girl. When Shawna was a teenager, she remembered going to visit grandma Margy at the little duplex she lived in a block farther North on Dewey Street. There was a large lilac bush where the driveway met the street. It would bloom every year and filled the neighborhood with its sweet fragrance. In the fall of 1997, after Margery passed, Fred and Betty went to the duplex and dug up the lilac bush. They transported it to their home on Quaker Rd in Riverton, KS, and planted it close to the swing set in the middle of their circle drive. At the age of 22, Shawna's husband Nate Witherspoon moved their family into a small farmhouse next door to Fred and Betty. Betty helped her granddaughter start a sprouting from the lilac bush in their yard where the driveway met Quaker Rd. Just before they moved in 2016, the bush bloomed for the first time and the smell of lilac welcomed a flood of happy memories to Fred, Betty, and Shawna.

Shawna's maternal great grandfather, **James Samuel Hixenbaugh (1897-1953)** was born on August 19th, 1897 to **Henry Hixenbaugh (1843-1933)** and **Sara J. Wright (1856-1932)** in Galena, KS.²⁴

Shawna's maternal great grandmother, **Cecil Gertrude Burkybile (1906-1982)** was born to **George Franklin Burkybile (1870-1943)** and **Anna Elizabeth Adamson (1878-1935)** on April 16th, 1906 in Missouri.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid pg. 21

²⁵ Ibid pg. 21

Galena, KS, was a booming mining town after rich ore deposits were discovered in the spring of 1877. The same year James Samuel Hixenbaugh was born, *The Topeka Mail and Breeze*, tells the tale of "Worse than the Benders." The Topeka newspaper article describes how a "passer-by" found a corpse floating in a mine shaft hole, that turned out to be the body of Frank Galbraith, a well-known miner of Galena. Upon gruesome testimony of a few women, the Staffleback brothers, George and Ed, were charged with murder in the first degree and their Cora, the wife of George was held as a witness. Their mother, Nancy Wilson was also charged with murder in the first degree. The author describes the family as ones that kept a notorious "deadfall", and "slept all day or slunk from the light of sun", while their house was "alight" at night and had all kinds of "disreputable people that came and went." The old women claimed to be a spirit medium and was known to go into trances from time to time. In one of the women's testimonies, she claimed they had murdered many people, although no other bodies were immediately found. Reports and investigators from across the country flocked to the town to get in on the action. With a town that was so rich with ore money and travelers seeking work, it is no surprise that crime ran rampant in the city. This did not seem to hinder the settlement of those that were born in the town though.²⁶

James Samuel Hixenbaugh married Cecil Gertrude Burkybile on May 7th, 1932 in Jasper County, Missouri. Cecil was not James' first wife, he

²⁶ "24 Sep 1897, 11 - Kansas Farmer and Mail and Breeze at Newspapers.com." Newspapers.com. Accessed November 26, 2019. <https://kansashistoricalsociety.newspapers.com/image/366204020/?terms=Galena+staffleback+murder>.

was previously married to Nellie Belle Burkybile on August 28th, 1923.²⁷ James had two children from his first marriage when he married Cecil two years after his wife Nellie had passed in December 1930.²⁸ James Hixenbaugh and his second wife, Cecil Burkybile, had four children together. Combined, the couple had 8 children, as Cecil had two children with her late husband Oval Giddens. Cecil Burkybile died of tuberculosis in July 1982. She was in a facility for those suffering from the disease in Western Kansas.²⁹

²⁷ Ibid pg. 21

²⁸ “Nellie B Burkybile Hixenbaugh (1904-1930) - Find...” Find A Grave. Accessed November 24, 2019. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/26659988/nellie-b-hixenbaugh>.

²⁹ Ibid

GENERATION FIVE

A1a1a1. James Albert Hendry (1865-1945)
A1a1a2. Mattie Mellesie Calhoun (1876-1947)

A1a1b1. Francis Howard Decker (1896-1974)
A1a1b2. Verlin Ellen Neal (1898-1967)

A1a2a1. William Vandiver (1888-1952)
A1a2a2. Effie Hacker (1893-1967)

A1a2b1. UNK
A1a2b2. UNK

A1b1a1. Walter William Shallenburger (1881-1948)
A1b1a2. Bessie Audella Coberly (1891-1946)

A1b1b1. James William Overstreet (1888-1947)
A1b1b2. Mary Catherine Palmer (1888-1922)

A1b2a1. Henry Hixenbaugh (1843-1933)
A1b2a2. Sara J. Wright (1856-1932)

A1b2b1. George Franklin Burkybile (1870-1943)
A1b2b2. Anna Elizabeth Adamson (1878-1935)

James Albert Hendry (1865-1945) and his wife, Mattie Mellesie Calhoun (1876-1947) were both born in Illinois. They were married in Shelby, Indiana.

Shawna's paternal great-great grandfather, Francis Howard Decker (1896-1974) was born in Jonesborough, Tennessee. His wife, Verlin Ellen Neal (1898-1967), was born in Scott, Iowa. They were married in Iowa in 1917. Francis was a second generation American. His father, Fredrick Decker (1862-1936) was born in Delaware. His parents were immigrants from Moosbronn, Rastatt, Baden, Germany. Charles Frederick Decker Sr. (1832-1914) was born on April 4th, 1832. Charles immigrated from Germany to the United States around 1850 and worked under a potter in Philadelphia

named Richard Reemey.³⁰ Around 1870, he moved south and established Keystone Pottery. Decker and his sons managed to make Keystone Pottery the largest manufacturer of household wares in the state of Tennessee from the mid 1870's to 1906. Decker specialized in jugs, large crocks, and churns. He also made flowerpots, paving stones, tombstones, chamber pots and drainage pipes.³¹

In Figure 6.6 "Households with Key Domestic Goods, by Year," Fischer and Hout use this graph to illustrate the trend in domestic items owned by Americans from 1900-2000. When the data is analyzed, it tells us that many items, such as inside toilets, telephones, and automobiles, were eventually universally owned. Homeownership, however, did not follow that same trend. Due to governmental laws back in the early 1900's, data was collected according to race. This knowledge allowed the authors to see that by the 1940's indoor plumbing was spreading. 63 percent of whites had indoor plumbing, where only 26 percent of blacks had indoor plumbing. It also highlights how nearly no-one owned a car in 1900 and in 1935, 60 percent of whites owned a car compared to only 20 percent of blacks. By 1990, 95 percent of whites owned a car compared to 80 percent of blacks bringing the percent difference down to 15 points. The authors go on to state that diffusion is what lead to nearly all Americans, regardless of background or race, owning a car by the end of the century.³²

³⁰ Cox, Stephen D. "Charles Frederick Decker Sr." Tennessee Encyclopedia. Tennessee Historical Society, March 1, 2018. <https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/charles-frederick-decker-sr/>.

³¹ Ibid pg. 27

³² Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 155-156.

Seeing the spread of ownership of household items, such as indoor plumbing, gives perspective to the demand for the items that Decker and his sons were producing. One of Deckers' sons was, Frederick Decker, him and his wife Sara Jane Broyles gave birth to a son, Francis Howard Decker and moved to Villisca, Iowa. Francis and his wife Verlin had a daughter, whom they named Frances Elizabeth. I knew her as Mo and she was my great-grandmother. Although they did not continue ceramics, I was very intrigued to learn about this part of my history. We know traits are inherited from our ancestors and I have always had a passion for art. Ceramics is my chosen media and has always felt very natural to me. Many pieces of Decker pottery are in museums in Tennessee today and I hope to go visit soon.

William Hoffman wrote an article for Ceramics in America 2005. He wrote this article to describe the findings of the excavation of the circular updraft kiln of Charles F. Decker Sr. that took place in 2004. According to Hoffman, the Civil War ravaged the kin-based social and economic networks that supported craft communities in the rural south. When they began to rebuild, numerous immigrant potters came from the North, looking for land to purchase. They traveled the "Great Road" from Pennsylvania to Tennessee. Keystone Pottery ceased production in 1910. The excavation revealed an interesting circular updraft kiln, which likely came from his German background, as most of the other potters' kilns were a typical southern groundhog kiln. Investigation of the waster pile adjacent to the remains of the kiln led to many pieces of cobalt decorated pieces such as storage crocks, jugs, tobacco pipes, and more. Most work appears to have been coated with a

dull-brown iron slip, this was most likely done to provide a uniform appearance to his work. With an increase in industrial production of utilitarian goods, Decker had to adjust the vessels he created to fit the demand of the people he was selling to. By the turn of the century, industrial production had almost completely replaced locally produced stoneware with mass-produced, refined white earthenware.³³

Shawna's maternal family appears to have immigrated from Reichen, Germany, to Pennsylvania in the 1700's and Yorkshire, England to Maryland, British Colonial America around 1750's.³⁴

³³ "William Hoffman The Stoneware Kiln of Charles F. Decker in Washington County, Virginia." Chipstone. Accessed October 14, 2019. <http://www.chipstone.org/article.php/220/Ceramics-in-America-2005/The-Stoneware-Kiln-of-Charles-F.-Decker-in-Washington-County,-Virginia->.

³⁴ Ibid pg. 21